

Highlights of the NASA Ames Research Center
Space Technology Research and Development (STRAD)
Request for Proposal
DRAFT NNA07198991R - ACA

Introduction

This document highlights significant aspects of the attached Space Technology Research and Development DRAFT Request for Proposal (RFP). Included in this overview is a brief discussion of some of the issues related to the contract scope and intent, incentives, selection criteria, and other issues of significance to this acquisition. The discussion also provides some insight into the reasoning that went into the formulation of the RFP. These highlights also provide a section-by-section account of important information regarding the RFP. However, these highlights should not be a substitute for a thorough and comprehensive review of the RFP.

The Government's intent is to enter into a contractual arrangement, which will allow the Ames Research Center to perform space technology research and development. The Government is confident that this mission can be accomplished through a partnership between the cognizant Ames organizations and the Contractor.

We are very interested in your comments regarding all aspects of the Draft RFP, in particular, the area of Contract Type. As noted on the synopsis:

To ensure the appropriate contract type is used, the Government is taking a second look at using a Cost-Plus-Award-Fee arrangement for this acquisition. Therefore, in addition to other comments on the DRAFT RFP, the Government is soliciting input regarding the type of contract to be used for this acquisition. Other contract types for consideration include both Fixed-Price and Cost-Reimbursement contracts, such as FFP, FPI, FPAF, CPFF, and CPIF. Please include information regarding why a particular contract type might be more appropriate (benefits and impediments), how that proposed contract type would affect costs and how you would propose. Please also address possible incentives / standards for technical, cost, and schedule performance; risk mitigation; employee and asset safety and security; innovative best practices; quality of service to users; responsiveness to changing requirements and budget; and identifying opportunities for technical and administrative improvement.

Presolicitation Conference Information:

A PreSolicitation Conference and (2-hour) Walking Tour will be held on April 1, 2008 from 9 to 12. Due to badging requirements, only US Citizens will be able to obtain badges for this conference and tour. **Further details are provided in the DRAFT RFP, L.4 PreProposal / PreBid Conference.**

Current Contract Information:

The proposed acquisition is a follow-on to the current contract, NNA04BC25C, that is presently being performed by ELORET, Inc., which was awarded based on a competitive small business set-aside. Contract NNA04BC25C provides on-site multidisciplinary engineering research and development for the Space Technology Division (Code TS) at ARC over a four-year period of performance with a staff of about 75, at a total estimated cost of \$4

million per year. Contract NNA04BC25C is a performance-based, cost plus award-fee (CPAF) contract that was awarded on a competitive basis to ELORET, Inc. in 2004. The contract contains a one-year base period of performance with three one-year option periods. The contract is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2008. The Statement of Work is Performance-Based, written in terms of functional requirements implemented by Contract Task Orders (CTOs). The contract includes an organizational conflict of interest clause that prohibits any contractor from engaging in aerospace vehicle design or manufacturing during the performance of the contract and for a period of 3 years following completion of performance.

Information Specifically Related to this Acquisition:

This acquisition is issued as a Small Business Set-Aside with the expectation of a single contract award.

The NAICS code is 541712 - Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences, with a Size Standard of 1,000 (Space Vehicles and Guided Missiles, their Propulsion Units, their Propulsion Units Parts, and their Auxiliary Equipment and Parts.)

The contract is expected to have a Minimum Value of \$250,000 and a Maximum Value of \$40,000,000, and is for a period of five (5) years (a two-year base period with three one-year options). This contract will be a Performance-Based contract. The SOW is formatted such that the Contractor should have a clear understanding of the required outcomes rather than the expected effort. This is intended to allow the Contractor autonomy and responsibility to manage its resources and to encourage the partnership between NASA and the Contractor.

NOTE: As stated in the presolicitation synopsis posted on March 17, 2008, and in the Introduction above, the Government is taking a second look at using a Cost-Plus-Award-Fee arrangement for this acquisition. Therefore, in addition to other comments on the DRAFT RFP, the Government is soliciting input regarding the type of contract to be used for this acquisition. Other contract types for consideration include both Fixed-Price and Cost-Reimbursement contracts, such as FFP, FPI, FPAF, CPFF, and CPIF. Please include information regarding why a particular contract type might be more appropriate (benefits and impediments), how that proposed contract type would affect costs and how you would propose. Please also address possible incentives / standards for technical, cost, and schedule performance; risk mitigation; employee and asset safety and security; innovative best practices; quality of service to users; responsiveness to changing requirements and budget; and identifying opportunities for technical and administrative improvement.

The primary mission of the Space Technology Division and the Ames operating organizations remains constant. The Government expects that nearly all activities will be accomplished through teams consisting of NASA and Contractor personnel. The number of projects and the customer base served under this contract continue to change. These factors, as well as other potential changes and the desired improvements the Government intends to achieve, require a significant amount of flexibility for the NASA/Contractor partnership to function.

Contract Task Orders (CTOs) will be a critical tool used to administer this contract since the Government cannot precisely predict the magnitude of services that will be required during the life of this contract. The Government intends to issue a relatively small number of CTOs, typically at annual intervals during the life of the contract, which will allow the Contractor to address changes in the service levels needed and propose realistic estimated CTO values. The estimated costs will be used to establish the overall total contract value.

The evaluation factors: Mission Suitability, Past Performance, and Cost, have been developed and prioritized to allow the Government the ability to choose a Contractor which it believes will best meet the objectives of this contract. *Mission Suitability is somewhat more important than Past Performance, and Past Performance is significantly more important than Cost.*

The Past Performance evaluation assesses the contractor's performance under previously awarded contracts. The past performance evaluation is an assessment of the Government's level of confidence in the offeror's ability to perform the solicitation requirements. Past Performance will be evaluated based on the corporate entities and subcontracting arrangements that are being proposed. Past Performance will be evaluated for each offeror using the levels of confidence ratings reflected in the Draft RFP, M.2 Evaluation Approach. The Past Performance of these performing entities along with the quantity of relevant experience will be of importance in determining a rating. Past Performance Questionnaires will be utilized to determine which offerors have demonstrated the ability to meet similar contract requirements.

Specific Highlights by Section

The remaining information presented below, by section, is used to delineate significant aspects of the RFP that the offeror should be aware of.

1. SECTION B - SUPPLIES OR SERVICES AND PRICE/COSTS

- a. During the performance of the resulting contract, the Government plans to issue task orders with clearly defined objectives, thus avoiding open-ended requirements. This approach will allow the Government to more accurately define the risk and costs associated with each task assignment.
- b. The Government envisions that approximately 6 task orders may be authorized within the first 90 days of the contract; however, the number of task orders could increase based on the Government requirements. A performance-based approach does not require that separate CLINs be established for each task order. Task orders under this contract are expected to vary in complexity, risk, and duration.
- c. As the type of contract is under consideration, offerors are cautioned that, although Clause B.2 reflects a Cost-Reimbursement type contract, this is not a fact. As noted above, we are considering all types of contract besides CPAF including FFP, FPI, FPAF, CPFF, and CPIF.
- d. Additionally, Clause B.2 sets the minimum and maximum value for the contract and delineates that the contract value will be the total of all task orders issued.
- e. Clause B.4 sets the limit for the period of performance for issuing task orders under this contract.

2. SECTION C - DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATION/WORK STATEMENT

The Statement of Work (SOW) applicable to this RFP describes the requirements for work to be performed under a performance-based contract at NASA Ames Research Center. The SOW is intentionally written describing the overall scope of STRAD requirement to be accomplished.

The task orders will be written in an “outcome/output” manner to allow the successful Contractor to perform the effort on a completion basis. This approach will require greater diligence on the part of the Government, in terms of clearly stating the objectives of each task order and on the Contractor for deciding how to effectively meet the Government’s requirements in a safe, cost effective, and timely manner.

3. SECTION D – PACKAGING AND MARKING

No significant features or issues in this section.

4. SECTION E – INSPECTION AND ACCEPTANCE

No significant features or issues in this section.

5. SECTION F: DELIVERIES OR PERFORMANCE

As shown in F.4 and F.5, Delivery Schedule and Delivery of Reports, respectively; contract level reports and other deliverables are included in Section J as Attachment J.1 (a) 2.

Contract Task Orders will include a schedule for specific task deliverables including reports.

6. SECTION G CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION DATA

Offerors are requested to take note of the new Government Property clauses as G.6 Contractor Requests for Government-Provided Property (Deviation) and G.7, Installation-Accountable Government Property (Deviation) located in this section.

7. SECTION H: SPECIAL CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

- a. The new Organizational Conflicts of Interest, and Limitation of Future Contracting Clause, H.2) includes information regarding potential conflicts of interest and limits on future contracting for this acquisition. NOTE: the nature and restriction specified in this clause is not identical to the current contract, nor is the clause itself worded the same as the current contract.
- b. As part of the task order negotiations process, H.3 Task Order Procedure, the Contracting Officer and the Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative (COTR) will assess the direct labor and indirect rates proposed for the individual task orders, and compare them against the successful offeror’s original proposal.
- c. Clause H.6 Security Registration and Identification Badges – On-Site Contractors, Excluding Construction is currently undergoing revision. Offerors are directed to clause I.3 Personal Identity Verification of Contractor Personnel.

8. SECTION I – CONTRACT CLAUSES

Clause I.3 Personal Identity Verification of Contractor Personnel requires the contractor’s compliance with agency personal identity verification procedures that implement Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance M-05-24, and Federal Information Processing Standards Publication (FIPS PUB) Number 201. Within this clause are the process and procedures for the NASA Personal Identity Verification Card Issuance (PCI) of a PIV credential.

9. SECTION J - LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- a. Attachment J.1.(a) 1 is the Statement of Work.
- b. Attachment J.1.(a) 2 is the listing of reports required for this contract.
- c. Attachment J.1(b) 1 Government Labor Estimate Including Position Descriptions provides an Estimated Staffing Matrix to be used for proposal purposes only, this matrix will not be used to determine Contract Value (see Section B paragraph b., above).

10. SECTION K - REPRESENTATIONS, CERTIFICATIONS, AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF OFFERORS

Offerors are reminded that they must have an active Central Contractor Registration and current Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA).

SECTION L: INSTRUCTIONS, CONDITIONS, AND NOTICES TO OFFERORS

- a. FAR 52.215-1, Instructions to Offerors-Competitive Acquisition, ensures that offerors are aware that the Government intends to evaluate proposals and award a contract without discussions with offerors (except clarifications as described in FAR 15.306(a)). Therefore, the offeror's initial proposal is expected to contain the offeror's best terms from a cost or price and technical standpoint. However, the Government reserves the right to conduct discussions if the Contracting Officer later determines them to be necessary. The Government seeks to maximize the quality of the offeror's initial proposal, improve the efficiency of the selection process, and reduce lead-time.
- b. Due to the nature of the research and development work to be performed under this contract, the Government cannot pre-specify the requirements for the task orders to be issued. Therefore, the Government has provided an estimated staffing chart (See Section J, Attachment J.1 (b) (1)). The estimates are FOR INFORMATION ONLY and are not intended to represent a binding requirement since the exact skill mix and work distribution are dependent on task orders issued after the contract is awarded. Offerors are instructed to explain any proposed differences from the information provided on this matrix.
- c. For purposes of proposal submission, an Other Direct Costs (ODCs) chart is provided. These amounts represent the Government's current best estimate of the contract requirements. If amounts other than those provided are proposed, the Offeror shall provide sufficient detail to explain how the proposed amounts are derived, identifying all ODCs applicable to this requirement, and indicating the reasons for these costs and the basis for pricing.
- d. Offeror's must follow the instructions carefully and ensure that: page counts are not exceeded; that the information submitted is relevant to the oral proposal (Management Sample Task) and written proposal volumes and sections; is formatted as requested; and is complete and accurate. Please note that for this acquisition, a Major Subcontract is defined as a subcontract valued at or over \$500,000.00 for the life of this contract, including options.
- e. A PreSolicitation Conference is planned to be held at the time and date specified in Provision L.4. Presentation slides and a list of attendees will be posted to the NASA Ames Business Opportunities website after the conference is held.

- f. Solicitation paragraph L.8, Instructions for Management Sample Task Oral Presentation includes information regarding the required Oral Presentation for the Management Sample Task.. The format of the Management Sample Task and other Mission Suitability requirements can be found at paragraph L.9, Proposal Preparation—Specific Instructions.

12. SECTION M – EVALUATION FACTORS AND AWARD

Offerors are advised to review this section carefully. The evaluation approach is outlined in paragraph M.2, Evaluation Approach and describes how proposals will be evaluated.

Industry Comments/Questions

In posting this Draft RFP, NASA is seeking comments on **all** aspects of the Draft Request for Proposal.

Industry is requested to submit comments and questions on improving the RFP. Comments will be most valuable if they are accompanied by section, clause, and paragraph references, and include suggestions on specific changes to NASA's approach. All comments will be reviewed, and responses will be developed, by NASA and will be posted (on a non-attribution basis) on the Ames Business Opportunities Home Page. Comments are also welcome on areas that the interested party believes should be addressed, but are not currently covered in the Draft Request for Proposal. Where appropriate, the Government will modify the relevant sections of the RFP in order to reflect suggestions from industry, or to address issues of consistency, ambiguity, or vagueness.

Conclusion

This concludes the Highlights for the Draft RFP. Potential Offerors are encouraged to attend the Pre-Proposal Conference. In addition, any questions should be submitted in writing to the Contracting Officer. Mail questions to the address below, email them to Lana.Jones.Clemon@nasa.gov or fax them to 650-604-0912.

NASA Ames Research Center
Attn: Lana Jones Clemon
M/S 241-1; Code JAC
Re: NNA07198991R - ACA
Moffett Field, CA 94035-1000

As a final note, the information provided in these highlights is not intended to be construed differently from the information in the RFP. Should an apparent conflict in interpretation exist, the information in the RFP takes precedence over information in this highlights document.